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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/629,312	07/28/2003	Chia-Ching Chiu	HOP1119513	6598
26389	7590	02/02/2006	EXAMINER	
CHRISTENSEN, O'CONNOR, JOHNSON, KINDNESS, PLLC			DEVORE, PETER T	
1420 FIFTH AVENUE			ART UNIT	
SUITE 2800			PAPER NUMBER	
SEATTLE, WA 98101-2347			3751	

DATE MAILED: 02/02/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/629,312	CHIU, CHIA-CHING	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Peter T. deVore	3751	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 December 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) 1,9,10,14,24-26,28 and 31-35 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) 32 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,9,10,14,24-26,28,31 and 33-35 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
 - 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Claim 32 remains withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. Election was made by original presentation (see the office action mailed 3/24/05).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The indicated allowability of claim 8 is withdrawn in view of the newly discovered reference to Sebastian. Rejections based on the newly cited reference(s) follow.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 9, 10, 14, 24-26, 28, 31, and 33-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Everard in view of Tickle, Martin, Sebastian, and Hajek.

The Everard reference discloses a portable washing device comprising a bottom wall, inflatable side walls comprising stacked tubular members, the upper member being C-shaped, and a drain outlet (See Figures 1 and 2), but does not disclose an opening, an air valve, a drain valve, a heat seal/seam/increased cross-sectional contact area, or an inflatable head structure. However, the Tickle reference discloses a similar device

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including a drain valve 45 to prevent drainage during usage of the device. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to employ a drain valve on the Everard device in view of Tickle to prevent drainage during usage of the device. Also, the Martin reference discloses a similar device including an opening 40 and an air valve 42 for convenient inflation of the device. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to employ an opening and an air valve on the Everard device in view of Martin for convenient inflation of the device. Also, the Sebastian reference discloses a similar inflatable device wherein the connection between tubular members is formed by a heat seal/seam 22 which is teardrop shaped at its end 22 (see Figure 2) which would also form a larger lateral connection area/increased cross-section contact area at the ends of the tubular members of the Everard device for a strong seal/seam/connection between the members, especially at their ends (see col. 6, lines 30-32). It would have been obvious to employ a heat seal/seam which is teardrop shaped at its end in the Everard device (which would also form a larger lateral connection area/increased cross-sectional contact area between the tubular members of the Everard device) in view of Sebastian for a strong seal/seam/connection between the members, especially at their ends. Also, the Hajek reference, discloses a similar device including an inflatable head support structure 36 adjacent the opening for improved comfort of the user. It would have been obvious to employ an inflatable head support structure on the modified Everard device adjacent the openings in view of the teachings of Hajek for improved comfort of the user.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 12/1/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant first argues that while Sebastian does disclose the use of a heat seal to divide an air bladder into smaller chambers and to enlarge the ends for strengthening purposes, it does not disclose the use of heat seals to exteriorly join two inflatable rings. However, it is the Examiner's position that one of ordinary skill in the art would use the heat seal taught by Sebastian to strengthen the Everard apparatus given the similarities between the Sebastian apparatus and the Everard apparatus. Applicant next argues that Hajek does not teach an inflatable structure. However, it is the Examiner's position that the Hajek bag is sealed (see col. 3, lines 49-54) and is therefore inflatable.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

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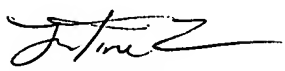
the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Peter T. deVore whose telephone number is (571) 272-4884. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Justine Yu can be reached on (571) 272-4835. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Pd Pd


JUSTINE R. YU
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700

1/31/06